

Wednesday, February 16, 2005

## State works to eliminate childhood lead poisoning

Childhood lead poisoning is one of the most serious environmental health problems that young children face, but it's also 100 percent preventable.

For that reason, the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program will be offering training to all local health departments in March and April of this year (see box) on all aspects of running a lead program locally, including screening and case management.

"Local health departments are critical partners in the state's Childhood Lead Poisoning Elimination Plan," said Maria Larson, director of the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at the State Department of Health. "By offering this training, we hope

to give local health departments the knowledge and tools they need to successfully run lead prevention programs." State and community

poisoning. About 13,000 Hoosier children have elevated blood lead levels.

"Elevated levels of lead in blood are dangerous for children, especially for children younger than six years of age, whose developing brains are particularly vulnerable," said Wendy Gettelfinger, RN, assistant commissioner, Community and Family Health Services at the State Department of Health. "Lead poisoning in young children can cause damage to the brain and the nervous system, causing learning and behavior problems, and hearing loss."

State and federal officials partnered with environmental, housing, and medical experts, as well

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### LHD Trainings

Area	Date	Location
Central	March 10	Indianapolis
Northeast	March 15	Warsaw
Northwest	March 17	Merryville
Southeast	March 22	North Vernon
Southwest	March 24	Jasper
NorthCentral	March 29	Logansport
SouthCentral	March 30	Columbus
Central	April 12	Indianapolis

leaders recently announced the Childhood Lead Poisoning Elimination Plan, a detailed plan to keep more Hoosier kids from joining the more than 430,000 American children already affected by lead

## Sue Uhl joins ISDH as Deputy Health Commissioner



Photo by Dan Axler

Sue Uhl, JD, joined the staff of the Indiana State Department of Health as Deputy State Health Commissioner on February 14, 2005.

Prior to joining the Indiana State Department of Health, Uhl was the assistant vice president and associate general counsel for Golden Rule Insurance Company

in Indianapolis from 2001 to 2005. She was corporate counsel for the company from 1997 to 2001.

Her professional experience also includes 16 years with the Health and Hospital Corporation of Marion County in Indianapolis in various positions, including environmental health specialist and senior attorney.

Uhl received her bachelor's degree in natural resources and environmental sciences in 1979 from Purdue University. She earned a law degree from Indiana University, Indianapolis in 1987.

Uhl is currently serving on the Long-Term Care Committee of the

American Council of Life Insurers and on the board of directors of the Big Brothers Big Sisters organization.

She also served on the Big Sisters board of directors from 1999 to 2001, on the Arthur A. Jordan Branch of the YMCA board of managers from 1997 to 2000, and on the board of advisors for the West Central Solid Waste District from 1995 to 1998.

Uhl resides in Lizton, Indiana with her husband Mark Harrison, and is a native of Louisville, Kentucky. As a child she moved to Indianapolis, and is a graduate of North Central High School.

## Free dental care 'Gives Kids a Smile' on February 4

Dentists and professional dental staff across Indiana helped to "Give kids a smile" on Friday, February 4 by offering them free dental services.

This is the third year that the Indiana Dental Association has sponsored a day in February called "Give kids a smile! – National Children's Dental Access Day," during which lower-income children up to age 16 can receive free dental care in private dental offices and other community locations throughout Indiana.

In 2004, about 300 dentists and professional dental staff provided free care for more than 1,300 children in 32 counties. The services

provided included screenings, cleanings, sealants, extractions, and restorative care.

The Indiana State Department of Health helped support this year's event by providing the Indiana

Dental Association with mailing lists from the Women, Infant and Children's Program (WIC) and the Maternal and Children's Special Health Care Services to help them target even more children who might benefit from the free dental screenings.

Mark Mallatt, DDS, director of the Office of Oral Health, volunteered his services at the Indiana University School of Dentistry in Indianapolis, which participated in the "Give kids a smile" day. The Office of Oral Health also donated toothbrushes to the School of Dentistry.

"This program provides at least one day a year

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Photo by Dan Axler

ISDH's Mark Mallett, DDS, volunteered his services at the Indiana University School of Dentistry during National Children's Dental Access Day on February 4.

## Staff, families invited to join Circle City Dribble

This year there are several sporting events in Indianapolis focusing on woman athletes.

One of these events is the 2005 Women's Final Four at the RCA Dome on April 3 and 5. The event brings a special opportunity for families to get out and get active.

The Governor's Council for Physical Fitness and Sports has partnered with the event organizers to promote this opportunity to state employees. On Saturday, April 2, an event called the Circle City Dribble will take place. The event

consists of 2005 kids and families dribbling basketballs through a route beginning at White River State

Park and ending at the RCA Dome. There will be local celebrities and entertainers on hand to make the event even more special.

Check-in will begin at 11 a.m. at White River State Park and the event begins at noon. The parade will take approximately 45 minutes to complete. Participants will receive a Circle City Dribble T-shirt and kids 18 and under will receive a basketball for dribbling. At the conclusion of the event the T-shirt will allow the wearer free access to Hoop City on April 2. This is the fan experience for the 2005 Women's Final Four. Participants will also get access to open practice of the participating teams at the RCA Dome on that day.

You are invited to take part in the event by pre-registering.

This experience is free and the

online application and waiver are available at


<http://www.indianasportscorp.com/ISC2/finalfour15>.

Please feel free to contact Eric Neuburger, Governor's Council for Physical Fitness and Sports, at [eneuburg@isdh.state.in.us](mailto:eneuburg@isdh.state.in.us) with questions.

Apply early because space is limited.

--Eric Neuburger





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# Staff bids farewell to Dr. Wilson



Photo by Dan Axler

(Left) Dr. Wilson receives a flu-themed T-shirt at his farewell party on January 25. Charlene Graves, M.D., presented the shirt to him, as well as the poem, "The Flu Vaccine Saga" (see box).

(Right) ISDH staff greeted Dr. Wilson with a standing ovation as he left the building the final time on January 25. An estimated 150 staff members visited with him at his farewell party.

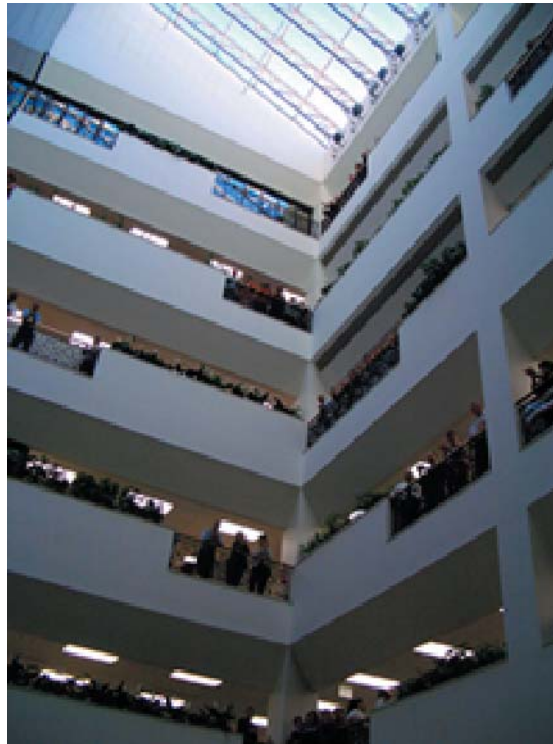


Photo by Helen James

(Below) Dr. Wilson's cake read "We return you to your previous life..."



Photo by Dan Axler

(Right) Assistant Commissioner Joe Hunt presents Dr. Wilson with a certificate of "temporal reprimistination" prepared by Barbara Stultz, Vital Statistics. The document "amends" his birth certificate to reflect his birth date to be four years later, restoring the four years he served as state health commissioner.



Charlene Graves, M.D., medical director for Immunizations, wrote this poem for Dr. Wilson's farewell party.

## The Flu Vaccine Saga

The flu, the flu  
It's nothing new  
Appearing each year  
It's oh so true.

September 2004, from CDC:  
It's fine, vaccine abounds  
Until 10/5/04, when All we do  
is changed around.

Vaccine supply is cut in half  
Problems created across the land  
At ISDH, Flu Vaccine  
Workgroup formed  
Those folks are sure a hearty  
band.

Your crew went right to work  
for you  
Got vaccine out it is true  
Now in January 2005  
Too much vaccine, demand  
has dived.

That's life in public health you  
know...sometimes you just  
can't win!

From your friend, colleague  
(and first-time poet),

--Charlene Graves

## Smile *(Continued from page 3)*



**give kids a smile!**

National Children's Dental Access Day

when children who wouldn't normally have access to dental care can get it for free," said Dr. Mallatt. "It is a great partnership between

private practitioners and public health, and every year there is an increased interest in the program from dental health professionals"

According to the American Dental Association, children are eligible for the free dental care if they are less than 16 years old and either receive Medicaid and cannot

find a dental provider, or do not have Medicaid or any other kind of dental insurance.

The "Give kids a smile" program is supported nationally by the American Dental Association to raise awareness of the need for better access to oral health care for lower-income children.

The American Dental Association reports that over the past two years, more than one million children nationwide have received free dental services during "Give kids a smile" day.

The program is part of National

Children's Dental Health month in February.

For more information on the "Give kids a smile" program, contact the Indiana Dental Association at 1-800-562-5646.

In addition to supporting "Give kids a smile," the Office of Oral Health sent out 2,500 educational packets for National Children's Dental Health month throughout the state to be distributed to clinics, schools, and dental health workers.

The packets included a color poster and coloring and activity sheets.

## Lead *(Continued from page 1)*

as community advocates, to develop the plan.

Aimed at parents, caregivers and landlords, the Elimination Plan offers simple, effective ways to prevent kids from being exposed to lead. It also outlines a long-term approach to eliminate lead contamination from Hoosier homes.

"Short-term steps are important but we see this plan as the beginning of a long-term strategy that we simply must implement and build on in the years ahead," said Larson.

"As part of Indiana's plan, the State Department of Health initiated a pilot program to increase lead screening among pregnant women and young children to encourage early detection, intervention, and appropriate health referral," said Larson. "This collaboration among the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program and the Women, Infants and Children program at the State Department of Health and the

state Office of Medicaid Policy and Planning is an example of the partnerships supported by the plan."

Lead is a highly toxic metal that at one time was an ingredient in many household products, including lead-based paints manufactured before 1978. Over time this paint chips, peels and becomes lead dust so children become exposed to lead paint in older homes. State health officials say that very young children are particularly susceptible to lead exposure because they crawl on the floor and put their fingers in their mouths.

One of the joint efforts that the plan outlines is for state environmental health experts and local health departments to continue to collaborate to alert Hoosiers to the issue of lead poisoning and to ensure lead contamination cleanup projects are done, and done safely.

Development of the plan was

driven by the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program at the Indiana State Department of Health with support from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Family and Social Services Administration, Indiana Department of Workforce Development, the Indiana Housing Finance Authority, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, local health departments, Head Start, the Association of Cities and Towns, the Association of Counties, the Indiana Apartment Association, the Indiana Bankers Association, and Improving Kids Environment.

For additional tips on preventing lead poisoning or to view a copy of the plan, visit the ISDH Web site at: [www.statehealth.in.gov](http://www.statehealth.in.gov) and the IDEM Web site at: [www.in.gov/idem/envirohealth/lead](http://www.in.gov/idem/envirohealth/lead).

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